GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3206
ANSWERED ON:22.03.2002
PLIGHT OF STARVING POORS
PRABHUNATH SINGH

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Union Government has been drawn to news-item captioned `Ensurejobs, food for rural poor, SC directs States` appearing in the Times of India dated March 5, 2002;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein;

(c) whether Union Government have taken any action in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI PRADHAN)

(a): Yes, Sir.

(b),(c),(d)&(e): The news item is with reference to a Writ Petition (Civil) No.196 of 2001 filed in Hon`ble Supreme Court of India by People`s Union for Civil Liberties Vs. Union of India and others.The Petition came up for further hearing on 4.3.2002. A copy of the Interim Order passed by the Hon`ble Court on the above date is annexed (Annex-I).The application mentioned in the Interim Order is the Application filed by the Petitioner. In so far as Government of India is concerned, the news-item mainly mentions stocks of foodgrains with FCI and the obligation of the Government to provide food to all. In this regard a statement indicating the steps taken by the Government to ensure availability of foodgrains for the poor is also annexed (annex-II).The steps taken inter alia, include the launch of the Sampooran Gramin Rojgar Yojana and the Food for Work Programme to ensure wage employment for the rural poor.

ANNEXURE-I

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (b),(c),(d)&(e) OF UNSTARRED QUSTION NO. 3206 DUE FOR ANSWE 22-03-2002 IN THE LOK SABHA.

Interim Order dated 4.3.2002 of Hon`ble Supreme Court of India in Writ Petition (Civil) No. 196 of 2001 filed by People`s Union for Civil Liberties.
`Issue notice to the State Governments. Notice to be served through the respective State Standing Counsel returnable on 19th March 2002. Reply to the application should be filed within ten days from today and especially with regard to the proposal that the State Government should frame scheme along with the lines of the Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Scheme.Copies of the application be given by the applicant to the counsel for the various States today if not already served., along with a copy of the order of the Court.`

ANNEXURE-II

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPPLY TO PARTS (b),(c),(d)&(e) OF UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.3206 DUE FOR ANS ON 22-03-2002 IN THE LOK SABHA.

Steps taken by the Government to make foodgrains available for the poor.

The steps taken by the Government to make foodgrains available to the poor section of the population are as under:

1.4.2000

i) The entitlement for BPL families was raised from 10 kg. per family per month to 20 kg. per family per month from April 2000.

2.11.2000

ii) It was decided to make foodgrains available at CIPs for BPL families for all welfareschemes, including SC/ST/OBC hostels

scheme, implemented by the various Ministries of the Government of India.

iii) It was decided to make foodgrains available at BPL rates for allotment to StateGovernments @ 5 kg. per head per month for covering categories of indigent people living in welfare institutions, such as beggar homes, orphanages/Nari Niketans, etc. sponsored by the State Governments and the concerned administrative Ministry of the Government of India.

iv) A decision was taken to make foodgrains available at BPL rates for development schemes (where the beneficiaries belong to the BPL category) implemented by Non-Government Organisations NGOs), sponsored by the State Governments and endorsed by the administrative Ministry in the Government of India, as also by international organizations like the World Food Programme.

1.12.2000

v) The allocation of foodgrains for Below the Poverty Line (BPL) families was revisedw.e.f 1.12.2000 on the basis of population projections of the Registrar General as on 1.3.2000. As a result, the number of BPL families eligible for subsidised foodgrains has increased from 5.96 crores families to 6.52 crore families.

25.12.2000

vi) The Antyodaya Anna Yojana was announced for the one crore poorest of the poor BPLfamilies. The scheme is now under implementation in all States/UTs. Each of the Antyodaya families is given 25 kg. of foodgrains @ Rs. 2 per kg. for wheat and Rs. 3 per kg. for rice.

1.1.2001

vii) The Food for Work Programme was introduced in eight drought affected States in January,2001 by the Ministry of Rural Development. Under FFW the foodgrains are allocated to StateGovernments free of cost. The programme has been subsequently extended to cover floods and other national calamities. From January, 2001 till 7.3.2002 39.33 lakh tonnes of foodgrains under FFW have been allotted to 11 States.

29.1.2001

viii) The Government of India allocated one lakh MTs of foodgrains for distribution in theearthquake-affected areas of Gujarat on 29 January 2001.

1.5.2001

ix) It was decided to make additional allocation of foodgrains at BPL rates to droughtaffected States for distribution to all the drought affected families (BPL & APL) @ 20 kg perfamily per month for a period of three months in the current financial year. The Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan havealready been allocated additional foodgrains aggregating 19.53 lakh tonnes. The Govt. of Bihar has been given additional allocation of 1.80 lakh MTs of wheat at BPL rate for flood relief.
12.7.2001

x) The entitlement for BPL families was raised from 20 kg. per family per month to 25 kg. per family per month.

xi) The Central Issue Price (CIP) of wheat and rice was reduced for APL families as under, which will be valid till 31.3.2002:

(Rs. per quintal)

APL

Wheat	610
Rice	830

15.8.2001

xii) The Prime Minister announced the Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY)on 15th August 2001. The Scheme was launched by the Ministry of Rural Development on 25.9.2001. Under theprogramme, it is envisaged to utilize 50 lakh MTs of foodgrains every year. The allocation of foodgrains under SGRY upto 28.2.2002 has been 30.82 lakh MTs.

Increase in total offtake of foodgrains

2. The offtake of wheat and rice from the Central Pool during the first 10 months of thecurrent financial year, 2001-02, was 230.25 lakh tonnes as against 136.83 lakh tonnes during the corresponding period of the last financial year, i.e., 2000-01, thus registering an increase of 68.27%. The total increase in the offtake of foodgrains under TPDS during this period has been 10.98 lakh tonnes.The increase in the open market sales (domestic) has been 32.82 lakh tonnes, while the increase under welfare schemes has been 22.09 lakh tonnes.
It may also be pointed out that there has been a significant increase in offtake in respect of BPL as may be seen below:-

(figures in lakh tonnes)

	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02(upto 31.1.2002)
BPL	61.70	69.94	95.35	91.64